

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 AF-06 ISO-00 ACDA-05 OMB-01 SAM-01 IO-10

CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05

PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 AID-05 /085 W

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R 250740Z AUG 75

FM AMEMBASSY SANA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6228

INFO AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA

AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

C O N F I D E N T I A L SANA 2361

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: MASS, IT, YE

SUBJECT: ITALIAN MILITARY AID TO YAR

1. SUMMARY: ITALIAN AMBASSADOR OUTLINED YESTERDAY PROGRAM OF ITALIAN MILITARY ASSISTANCE WHICH, WHILE LIMITED, IS CONVEIVED OF AS ANOTHER LEVER FOR PRYING SOVIETS OUT OF POSITIONS OF INFLUENCE IN YARG MILITARY.

2. IN CALL ON ITALIAN AMBASSADOR HERE IN SANA I WAS SHOWN AN TEN INCH HIGH STACK OF STUDIES DONE BY ITALINA MILITARY FOR YARG MODERNIZATION. STUDIES AMOUNT TO COMPLETE AND HIGHLY DETAILED PLANS FOR FACTORIES TO MANUFACTURE CATRIDGES, REPAIR WEAPONS OF ALL CALIBER, MANUFACTURE UNIFORMS, AND BOOTS, MAKE BREAD AND PREPARE OTHER MILITARY FOOD AND REPAIR ALL TYPES OF MILITARY WHEELED VEHICLES.

2. ITALIAN GOVT WILLING TO ADVANCE CREDITS OF \$5 MILLION

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AGAINST ANY OF THESE PROJECTS, WHICH CUMULATIVELY COME

TO MUCH MORE THAN THAT. VEHICLE REPAIR SHOP ALONE IS \$15 MILLION PROJECT AND AMBASSADOR SAID ABU DHABI MIGHT FINANCE IT.

3. AMBASSADOR EXPECTS ITALIAN MILITARY TEAM TO ARRIVE IN OCT OR NOV TO FINALIZE AGREEMENT WITH YARG.

4. AMBASSADOR ASKED ABOUT USG PLANS, WHICH I DESCRIBED IN GENERAL TERMS, MAKING IT CLEAR THAT WE WERE PREPARED TO RESPOND TO REQUESTS WHICH SAUDIS AND YARG BOTH CONSIDERED HIGH PRIORITY MILITARY SALES NEEDS. SAID THESE WERE NOT RPT NOT YET DEFINED, BUT IN ANY CASE BOTH RECIPIENT COUNTRY AND PAYING COUNTRY MIGHT WELL WANT OTHER WFETERN STATES TO TAKE PART IN ANY PROGRAM OF MILITARY MODERNIZATION HERE. SAID IMPORTANT THING WAS TO MAKE SURE DEFENSE OF YEMEN WAS UNDERTAKEN ON BASIS OF REGIONAL COOPERATION. USG NOT RPT NOT COMPETING TO SELL US ARMS.

5. ITALIAN AMBASSADOR SAID HIS GOVERNMENT'S MOTIVE WAS TO HELP PRY SOVIETS OUT OF POSITION OF INFLUENCE IN HORN OF AFRICA RAREA, WHICH HAD TRADITIONALLY BEEN AREA OF SPECIAL ITALIAN INFLUENCE--ESPECIALLY IN SOMALIA AND ETHIOPIA.

6. COMMENT: ITALIAN AMBASSADOR IS ARISTOCRAT WHO SHOWS VISITORS GREETING CARDS FROM KING UMBERTO AND HE MAY HAVE OVERSTATED HIS GOVERNMENTS INTEREST IN PLAYING BALANCE OF POWER ROLE IN HORN OF AFRICA. BUT THE PLANS ARE SURPRISING IN THAT THEY REPRESENT A CONSIDERABLE AMOUNT OF STAFF WORK ON PART OF ITALIAN MILITARY IN RESPONSES TO SOME YARG NEEDS. CREDITS AND PLANS REFLECT ITALAIN COMMERCIAL INTERESTS BUT ALSO YARG' DESIRE TO TURN

AWAY FROM EASTERN BLOC WEAPONS AND SOURCES OF SUPPLY.
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